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Little Brothers of Mine

A collection of
Missionary Stories
founded on fact

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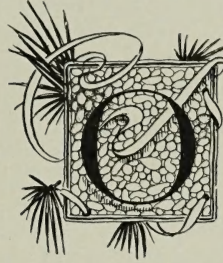
A little girl, carrying a baby nearly as large as herself, was once asked by a gentleman if her burden were not too heavy. "Oh, no, sir," she replied, "you see he's my brother." Could we but see in the poor, neglected children of the world, our "Little Brothers," we would soon find ways to help them.

OWAHHEE

Jeannette C. Alter



WAUCOMA.



OUR little red brother was not born with a golden spoon in his mouth; it is doubtful indeed if he could have even claimed a little horn spoon.

He was born in a wretched tepee, its rags fluttered back and forth in the wind like signals of distress, but there was no answering signal from the cluster of village tents farther up the beach.

It was the season for salmon fishing. Even the little children were helping to paddle the canoes back and forth. The men and boys, with rapid sweeps of their spiked oars, were bringing the shining fish to the surface, with deft turns of the wrist landing them in the canoes, and, as each boat filled, making for the shore with songs and shouts. There the women dressed the fish and hung them on frames to dry.

An old woman was plodding along in the sand some distance below this busy scene. Her face was furrowed with age and sorrow and there were tears in the dim, patient eyes. A few minutes before she had been rather roughly pushed aside by the younger women who thought her stiffened fingers too clumsy for their rapid work among the fish.

As she was nearing the stranger's tent, a child's wailing cry fell upon her ears. She leaned upon her stout stick, and shading her eyes, looked in the direction of the sound, then she hurried toward the tent as fast as her trembling limbs could go.

She hesitated a moment at the entrance, for the dead face of the mother bore no likeness to the people of her tribe, but the cry of the helpless babe brought tears again to her eyes, called forth by that nobler feeling of sympathy for human kind.

Wrapping the child tenderly in her blanket, and crooning over it like a mother bird twittering to its young, she carried it to her own tent in the village.

News of the mother's death spread quickly, and at the chief's order the worn body was carried across the water and laid to rest in their own burial ground on Memoluse Island, and little Owahhee was left alone in this great cold world that begrudges our big red brothers the room and right to live...

As the evening drew on, the women came to old Waucoma's tent. They exclaimed in soft tones of sympathy over the little waif now fast asleep in her arms. "Waucoma's tent is lonely. We will give the little Owahhee a place by our campfires," but the old woman held her charge close saying, "This little stray bird has found its nest in my heart and my campfire shall keep us both warm." One by one the women went back to their own little ones, and more than one mother that night selected from her small store, clothes for the new baby in Waucoma's tent.

After a while the camp fires burned low. The moon arose behind the trees on Memoluse Island, shedding a wavering white pathway over the water and rested on the face of the sleeping child. The wind whispered softly in the pines and sighed through the shadowy firs. The call of the night birds mingled with the murmuring rush of the river.

Old Waucoma loved these sounds for they talked to her lonely heart. Many years before she had dedicated her only child to the thunder god and when her mother-love refused to give him up, the angry god had struck him dead at her feet. She knew nothing of the pitying love of the Saviour, and every time she heard the peal of the thunder she would stand with outstretched hands, imploring forgiveness. Now she was bent with age. What more could she give? The voices of the night seemed to whisper, "The child, the child." She looked down upon the innocent baby face; she laid its soft fingers against her withered cheek. No, she would keep him until the thunder god called for him—perhaps he had forgotten her broken vow.

The days passed and Owahhee learned to know the tender face and the crooning voice.

She fashioned a baby board, padding it with buck-skin like the one which had held her own little one so long ago. He soon grew too heavy for her arms, so she strapped him to her back and together they gathered drift-wood for the camp-fires or hunted reeds for baskets.

Owahhee's voice was music to her ears, but even in her joy there was the lurking fear of the thunder god.

One sultry day she had heard the threatening voice in the mountains, and after a night spent in weeping, she felt that she dare not withhold her treasure if he called again.

Weeks passed and the sullen roar of the distant Cascades would sometimes be mistaken for the sound she dreaded, yet was always listening for. At last the summons came in the far away muttering of an approaching storm. She dared not look upon the face of little Owahhee lest her courage fail. Wrapping a blanket about the sleeping child, her joy, the sunlight of her life, she staggered under the weight of her burden through the darkness and toiled painfully up a steep bluff, until she stood on the summit overlooking the river. The lightening flashed from the dark cloud overhead—The thunder god was very near.

Laying her precious burden down she covered him to shut out the rain, then while he slept, she crept away to wait under the shelter of a rock. In the bitterness of her grief she implored the thunder god to take her with the child. After awhile she seemed to sleep for the sound of Owahhee's

frightened baby voice brought her trembling to her feet. The storm cloud was disappearing in the horizon and the friendly face of the moon smiled down upon her. Was she dreaming? No, he was calling this time in anger as he struggled to free himself from the sheltering robe.

As Owahhee grew older, the river drew him with its happy voice, and through the long summer days he swam and dived with the village boys through the shining blue waves.

Once Waucoma went with him in the canoe to the Cascades and he was almost frightened at the sight of the water swirling and boiling around the sunken rocks. His wonder grew as the canoe glided over a forest of leafless trees standing upright far below the surface of the clear water. Then the old woman had a strange story to tell of the great stone bridge that had once spanned the river,—“The Bridge of the Gods” the Wallamets called it, and an old medicine man had foretold the doom of this tribe when the bridge would fall.

“Did you ever see the bridge?” asked Owahhee.

“Yes, once when I was a little girl my mother rowed me under the great stone archway and told me to look up. It was so dark I was afraid, but my mother said the Wallamets believed the bridge to be “good medicine” and their tribe would be powerful as long as it stood. But the Great Spirit became angry and shook the bridge down. After that the Wallamets sickened and died and their enemies killed them in battle—“now all gone.”

Owahhee longed to ask more questions but his grandmother was thinking of the past, and seemed to have forgotten him. That night he saw the bridge in his dreams just for a moment, then it went down with a crash that shook the earth. He woke to find Waucoma gone and the thunder pealing in the distance.

Before another moon had passed Waucoma was too feeble to go far from her tent. Owahhee went alone to gather the reeds which she wove in the curious Wallamet pattern so highly prized by other tribes, and he was to go alone for the first time to sell them to a tribe of plains Indians many miles inland. Proud? What boy, red or white, does not like to be entrusted with an important errand?

“I will bring you pemmican and buckskin and a fine buffalo robe.” Imitating the voice and manner of the old Wallamet warriors, he repeated the oath—“The earth hears me, the sun sees me.” Waucoma shook her head sadly—“The days will have no sun till you return,” she said.

The boy went in company with a party of men who were taking packs of dried salmon to trade. The interpreter went along to talk for them. This journey was destined to be the most important of Owahhee's life.

After the trading with the tribe was finished, he packed his new possessions in a neat bundle for carrying, and lay down, ready to start home at day-break. Two of the men sat by the camp-fire talking. Just as he was drifting into dreamland he heard words that caused him to sit up and listen eagerly.

They were speaking of a white man who had come to this tribe to tell of a God who loved all people and who suffered death for them. How different from the gods of his people! The first speaker arose, saying, “Let us go and hear more.” Seeing Owahhee's wistful look, he said, not unkindly, “You may go too if you wish.”

As they approached the central camp-fire they saw a man with a long beard, dressed in buck-skin. They made their way to the interpreter who stood at the Missionary's side. He turned to them and gave the man's message in the sign language, and for the first time they listened to the story of the Cross. "God so loved the world." How he drank in the words!

A few days later Waucoma in her tent heard of this great love. The feeble, trembling hands that had groped all her life in the darkness of superstition, now touched God's right hand and from the lips of the "little stray bird" whom she had sheltered she learned the way of life.

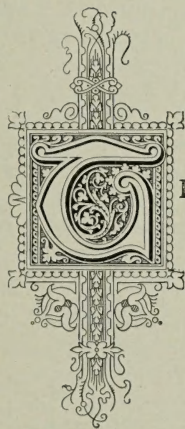


INDIAN MOTHER AND CHILD.



MANUEL'S BOOK

Mary Harper Wilson



HE straggling main street of Jacinta seemed aimless, and yet it did finally reach a goal in the small stone church whose doors stood open all day long, facing a sward of green where the children of the Cuban village played. Here, one morning, a little lad sang gaily while dragging around a baby in a soap-box. Yes, in a wooden soap-box fitted with rude wheels, for such was the only carriage of which tiny Lolita could boast. The boy who cared for her was not her brother, but an orphan, dependent for his daily meed of beans and bananas upon the grudging charity of Anna Sanchez, Lolita's mother. Yet it was scarcely charity, as Manuel amply repaid her for his scanty meals and meagre shelter by the care he gave the baby, and by other work he did both within and without her squalid palm-bark shanty.

Although Anna grumbled much about it, at times he went to school; and there, in company with the other boys, studied a few simple lessons. One duty he had which was almost a privilege, namely, every evening to climb up the steep, stone steps leading to the belfry of the church; and there with two sticks to beat the bell in alternate strokes, thus sounding the Angelus for the simple villagers. A most unholy clamor it was! Now whether the bell really had no clapper, or whether the rope was broken, or whether the hammering had simply become a custom, I cannot tell you. Only I know that such was the way the people of Jacinta were called to prayer. But on this special morning, as Manuel loitered by the hibiscus bushes aflame with gaudy bloom, he became aware that a girl with the fair skin and the pale hair of a foreigner was regarding him with amused attention. Now he had learned to associate foreigners with liberality; so not

unwillingly he responded to the call of Alice Kennedy's smile, and drew near to her with that winsome air of confidence so alluring to the possible dispenser of coin. Yet it was not money which the girl held out to him, but a book, a little, pretty book with a bright red cover. Could she mean to give it to him—to him who had never owned one except a tattered primer, perhaps? He clutched the unusual gift, while Alice laid her hand on his head and spoke a few words in her own language. She knew that he could not understand them; but perhaps she thought—what he recognized—that the tones would seem kind and friendly. Surely, a prayer went with the giving of that little copy of the gospel according to Matthew. Alice was leaving Cuba now; but she had wished before her departure to give this fragment of the Word of Life to some one who might thereby be brought to a knowledge of the true Way. She passed on her course and never knew what happened to the small Cuban boy. But let us see the sequel of that simple gift and of that prayer.

Stimulated by the desire to know what his pretty book said, Manuel began now to study with enthusiasm—so far, at least, as learning to read was concerned—and soon he was absorbed in following the wonderful story of the life of the Son of God upon earth. Much that he read seemed novel and amazing; yet his soul still held the credulity of childhood, and by the aid of the Holy Spirit some glimmer of the truth came to the boy's mind. His was not a weak faith although so limited as to intelligence. But soon it was to be tested.

Lolita, having now become able to discard the soap-box chariot and to trot about by herself, although somewhat unsteadily, did not need so much attention of Manuel, who, himself, was growing a tall lad. Anna still complained heartily of his determination to learn and found special offence in the red book from which he read most dilligently. Exasperated one day at discovering him with a circle of other boys listening intently as he spelled out to them the story of the Transfiguration, the impatient woman appealed to the priest as he passed along. A book? The priestly vigilance was aroused by such an unusual object in the grimy hands of an ignorant boy; so, though ordinarily indifferent enough to the welfare of his flock, Father Pedro paused. "What is this, my son, from which you read, and where did you get it?"

Falteringly, Manuel told of the gift which months before he had received. The priest snatched the precious volume from the boy and, after one glance at its title and imprint, tore off its flimsy binding, and, crushing its leaves into uselessness, flung the mutilated fragments into the dusty road.

Totally unprepared for this abrupt action, poor Manuel burst into a piteous cry of protest. A heavy blow descended upon him, and Father Pedro's harsh voice cried out to Anna, "Woman, shelter no longer this deceitful boy, or he will bring poison into the family that has protected him."

"What is it? What have I done? Is it not a book about the good God?" wailed the bewildered Manuel.

"It is one of the infamous Protestant books," thundered the priest, "and no one dares bring heresy into my parish."

Now at that word "heresy" even the untutored Anna was struck; for this was the worst of all sins condemned by her narrow creed. A cunning

thought also crossed her mind. Here at last was a good excuse for freeing herself from the burden of this lad.

"Go, wicked boy," she cried, "and never dare to speak to me or my children again!" and dragging away Lolita as she lingered near her beloved Manuel, Anna moved off swiftly.

The others, also, melted away. The priest, with black looks and muttered threats, passed on; and Manuel, stunned by the suddenness and cruelty of it all, after a few moments of dazed uncertainty, started slowly on the road which led out of the town to the palm-crowded inland hills. Once in the country, he turned aside to a secluded water-course, and there cast himself down on the fragrant fern and sobbed with all the thoroughness of childhood. His loved book was gone; his home, which, poor though it was, had still been a shelter; the dear Lolita too;—and what had he now to which he might look forward? But God saw the lonely boy and sent a friend to him.

A Cuban gentleman, having become aware of the truth and having abandoned the Romish faith, desired to use his wealth in Christian service. He was alone so far as immediate ties of family were concerned, and felt free to follow a plan which he believed promised well. This was to gather together as a household, neglected boys, and gradually, not only to have them trained in useful occupations, but to teach them about the Saviour.

Circumstances had lately directed Senor Lopez to Jacinta; though as yet he had seen no opening which might prudently be used for his purpose. But that day, he, too, had been present at Manuel's disgrace and had recognized immediately that here lay the prayed-for opportunity. So it is he who bends over the grief-stricken boy out by the lonely brook. Manuel has found a haven at last. But much he had to learn and much to forget. Nearly everything about the neat, white house where he was now to make his home seemed strange to him. A revolution in his thought and behavior must take place; and this in the occurring was no easy matter for either himself or his patient teacher. But grace implanted does bear fruit, and gradually Manuel underwent an improvement.

Now it happened that as time passed, a stealthy fever crept into the town, and many succumbed to the insidious enemy. One day, Senor Lopez, seeing with anxiety that Manuel began to droop, administered such remedies as were known to be useful; then left him to rest in his clean, little room with its long windows opening toward the old church. Listlessly, the lad's eyes dwelt upon the village green in front of it where, just then, the children were playing. Little Lolita, even, was there in her red dress. And at the sight, his mind slipped back over the past months so full of change for him. Yes, he was much happier now, and very grateful to his dear, new-found friend; and yet, he missed the little child for whom he had cared so faithfully, and whose love had been his without reserve. If only he could prove to Anna that he would do nothing to hurt Lolita nor anyone else! Then, too, he craved the gay companionship of the boys in the village, who had been taught to shun him and to jeer at him; and it hurt him keenly to think that they should regard him as some one to be dreaded and despised. But resolutely he blinked away a few tears and tried once more to give his whole attention to the merry games on the church green. Now, however, the children were all gone. Yet what is that scarlet spot climbing up the rude bell-tower stairs visible through the unlatticed windows? "Lo-

lita! It is Lolita!" he exclaimed, with instant comprehension. Often had he carried her up with him when he had gone on his errand of bell-banging. But he knew how unsteady were her steps even yet, and how perilous the ascent for her baby feet. Breathlessly he watched. Would she turn back before she reached the open belfry? But no! The scarlet dot crept on. A few moments more, and she would be on the treacherous verge where even a firmer foot might readily slip. "Lita! Lita" called the boy, as, forgetting his illness, he dashed through the open window, and down the street. But Lolita had quickened her pace and reached her goal, standing at last in the open bell-tower, where a little dizziness or carelessness will plunge her to an awful death. The child pauses, faltering, frightened now, as she sees the green, familiar world so far below. With a faint cry, she shrinks against the corner of the belfry, dreading the sky which seems so near, afraid to go back, afraid to stay, afraid of everything. She tries to call; she totters a little; then recovers herself at the sound of an encouraging voice, not yet grown unfamiliar, "Stand still, Lita! Don't look down! I am coming!" All thought of self had gone from Manuel, though his breath was coming fast and his head throbbed ominously. To reach Lolita! For nothing else had his mind room. How long, long the flight was! How steep the steps as never before! At the last one, he stumbled, spent with effort and excitement, but clutching the baby with desperate grasp. As he tried to lift her, he realized his own weakness, and knew that he dared not attempt the carrying of her down to the solid earth. She, sobbing, pressed close to him and refused to make any effort to help herself. An unaccustomed tremor seized him. Supposing he should lose consciousness, what would become of his charge? Would she have sufficient presence of mind to scramble down the steps? Would she stay quietly by him until he could gather strength? Or would some sudden movement make her lose her balance and topple over the unguarded edge? He shuddered with uncertainty. And no one would think of coming near them until the time for evening prayer. But here sprang up a swift thought. Perhaps he could beat the bell—the sticks lay near at hand—and the sound, at that unusual hour, would let the villagers know that something extraordinary was taking place in the stone tower. If they would but look up and see Lolita's red dress! Seizing a stick with the last shreds of his failing force, Manuel sent forth upon the air the clangor of the heavy bell. A few strokes only could he give, but they sufficed.

When the help came, the boy was found, half-fainting, yet still grasping Lolita.

"A brave boy," they called him then; and the deed so simple and impulsively done appealed to the impressionable Cuban hearts. This sentiment grew during the subsequent weeks while Manuel lay ill. So, when he recovered, he found that the boys were quite friendly. The forgiveness with which he welcomed them, the cordiality of Senor Lopez, proved most winning to the children whose elders had already been comparing the affectionate care of Manuel's "Padre," as they called his benefactor, with the harshness and indifference displayed by their own priest in their times of illness or sorrow. And so was made the modest beginning which developed into ample results. Senor Lopez has had his wish granted; and now many boys are under his care, learning to be useful men and hearing daily of the Saviour.

* * * * *

"But, Manuel," questioned a lively, brown-skinned lad, "Why did you hasten to help Lolita when her mother had been so cruel to you?"

Manuel hesitated before answering. He had learned to think humbly of himself.

"I had often wished to do something kind to her," he at length replied, "because I had read in my little book, 'Love your enemies. Do good to them that hate you.' Still, he added, honestly, "when the time came, I thought only of Lolita. But I prayed to our Lord Jesus all the way up to the top of the tower."



SONG OF THE WATER-SELLER

Matilda Strang Hyde



CHINK-A-CHINK! chink-a-chink!

Who'll buy a drink?

Not of orange, nor of rose,
Nor from Libnan's famous snows,
Welling from artesian spring
Comes the water that I bring

Cooled by flowers of tamarind,
Screened alike from sun and wind.

Chink-a-chink! chink-a-chink!

Who'll buy a drink?

Ah, my red-lipped little maid,
May that coral never fade!
Always may your merry laugh
Bead the liquor that you quaff!
Ho! my studious little man,
Read me screed from Al Koran.
Save your coin! I make my brew
Free to conjurer like you.

Chink-a-chink! chink-a-chink!

Who'll buy a drink?

Lady with the almond eyes,
I have something that you prize;
Jewels from the rich bazaar
Hide not in my humble jar,
Richer jewels, as you sup,
Sparkle from my drinking cup.

Chink-a-chink! chink-a-chink!

Who'll buy a drink?

Many a merchant from afar,
When he lost his guiding star,
Would have offered spices good,
Ivory and sandal-wood,
All the treasures in his pack,
For the water on my back.
For what avails a dying man
The perfumed wealth of caravan?
Phantom every other bliss
Failing nectar such as this.



Chink-a-chink! chink-a-chink!
Who'll buy a drink?
Scribe and peasant, sheikh and bey,
Let me cheer you on your way!
Rich and poor, to each I call
Filtered chrystal, good for all.
Chink! chink!
Who'll drink?

KIRPU

Mary J. Campbell



KIRPU.



OWN at one end of a straggling old village in North India stood a little cottage made of sun dried brick. A sacred peepul tree, which was worshipped every day by the villagers, threw out its great branches protectingly over this humble home. It always seemed to be saying to man and beast, "Come to me for shelter from that burning heat." This tree had respect in that village.

The cottage contained three happy people, a father, a mother, and a son. The son, who was now twelve years of age, was the cause of the happiness in that home. This little brother of yours won the hearts of every one who looked into his bright face. He was tall for his age and well made. His skin was not very dark. His black hair rippled in waves and defiant little curls that

no amount of cocoanut oil could subdue into the desired smoothness. His name was Kirpa Dass, which means the Slave of the Gracious One. His mother's pet name for him was Kirpu and that is what we shall call him.

Kirpu was now able to help earn his food and clothing by herding the villagers cattle and goats in the pasture land. His father was considered fairly well-to-do for he owned one whole acre of land, but times were hard, the rain-fall was not enough to make the grain of wheat big and round, and taxes were high.

It was evening time of an early day in March. Kirpu's mother had lighted a fire in her mud fire-place. She was seated on a low stool beside a large shallow brass pan, in which she was kneading the dough for the cakes that were always freshly baked before each meal. Kirpu would soon return and how hungry he would be after the long day spent in the fields. The mother smiled softly as she thought of that day, not far distant, when a little bride would be brought home for her son, and of how she would then be the honored mother with a daughter-in-law to do the household work. That

very day the barber's wife, the professional match-maker, had approached her on the subject and told her of a little girl in a neighboring village who could be had for, perhaps, the small sum of fifty rupees—or sixteen dollars—as her parents were very poor.

Kirpu soon came up the narrow lane singing as he drove the lazy animals before him. He was enveloped in a thick cloud of dust, which glistened, and sparkled as gold from the rays of the sinking sun. As he entered the broken gate leading into the tiny court-yard his mother looked up with a smile and said, "My son, why so late in coming home," then, with a startled air, added as she saw his torn garments and pale face, "What calamity has befallen you, my precious jewel?" Kirpu with a little careless wave of the hand said, "Oh nothing happened to me," for it was not manly for a boy to show fear. The mother's heart however, knew he had something to tell. She had not long to wait. He was soon nestled by her side and telling, in excited tones, a rather serious adventure that had befallen him.

"Santu and I," he said, "were seated on the ground playing marbles, beside our flock, when, all at once, we heard a rustling sound and on jumping up, I saw a huge snake, a python, coming toward us like the lightning, or so it seemed. I screamed to Santu: A snake! a snake! He dropped the marbles and we both made a dash for a mango tree, and not a minute too soon. We climbed up into its lowest branches, then peered down and what did we see? Santu's pet kid was half swallowed by the awful monster. Our screams brought to our help that Rajput farmer whose land joins our Uncle's.



THE RAJPUT FARMER.

He came running up with a thick stick and gave the snake a hard blow. It rose three or four feet ready to fight but having the kid partly down its throat could not do much to help itself, still the farmer had to give it nearly a hundred blows before it lay dead. Then mother dear, the farmer called his son, and placing the snake in a basket, they trudged off six miles to town carrying

it between them. They hoped to receive a reward for it. Everybody does, you know, who kills a poisonous snake and reports it. On the way, I heard, they stopped at the missionary's house, that place beside the banyan tree which was planted years ago by the holy man who was so good that he would not speak to anyone. Well they showed it to the Missionary Sahib and his eyes grew so big when he saw it and he said, "I never saw a snake like that." Some school girls peeped out from an archway and screamed when they saw it stretched out under the banyan tree."

His mother shook with fear and called out to her god, as all pious Hindu's do, "Ram! Ram!"

Then Kirpu continued. "The Sahib measured it, so the farmer's son said, and the measurement was eleven feet and three inches. It must be the truth, for mother, you know that missionary lady who came here last year said we must not tell lies even in little things."

"Heart of my heart," the mother now exclaimed, as she drew her son closer to her, "you must take an offering of buttermilk and fruit to the Kala Nag—Black Snake—in the morning, for your escape from death and we must implore the goddess to save us from the calamity that is fore shadowed by this bad omen."

Her heart was sad and heavy. Some great evil seemed about to fall upon their happy home. Her son had seen a snake. True he was not killed, but it was a bad sign. Then this morning when she was down at the river filling her jars with water, the shoe-maker's wife had told her that the rats were dying in her house. This reminded her that one had dropped dead at her feet when she was taking wheat from the bin three days ago, though she had not then allowed herself to be troubled by what she had heard, that where rats die, plague comes. She now realized with a slight shiver that she had picked this one up and thrown it away. What if this awful sickness should come to their village and take away her only child, or what, if she should be left a widow!

The father of Kirpu now came in and sat down near the cooking place. Having, in his youth lost the sight of one eye from a severe attack of smallpox he was called by the villagers, the "One Eyed." Kirpu's mother who had been brought to the village a young bride fifteen years before, was still called "Laree"—The Bride. They all loved the gentle little woman.

When she saw her husband enter, she drew her veil more securely over her head, arose, and soon had his beloved pipe ready for him. After the smoke he was ready for his supper. The savory dish of vegetables, and a plate of cakes were placed before him and Kirpu, by Laree, and she, like all true Hindu women, sat quietly in one corner until the men folks had finished their repast.

Her head was still full of forebodings. She could eat no supper that night even tho' Kirpu hovered over her and begged her to take a little. "The fever is in my body and my head is full of pain," she moaned, as she patiently scoured bright and clean the brass plates and cups.

The fever came up rapidly; her blood seemed to be boiling; her eyes were as balls of fire. The bed gave her no rest. All night long she lay tossing in that close little room, lighted by a tiny wick placed in oil in an earthen cup. The foul air seemed to suffocate her. Everything appeared to her blood-red. Surely this was THE SICKNESS and she must die.

Oh! the priest had lied to her who said the rulers of the land poisoned the wells and thus spread the plague! Since the day government officials had thrown the powder into their well, which would, he said, make the water sweet and pure, she had not tasted a drop of it, but had herself gone to the river, two miles distant, and brought all the water for her family. In her delirium she again seemed to be swaying under the burden of the jars and would cry out, "I'm so tired!" Then once they heard her say, "The rat! yes, I touched it. The shoe-maker's wife said, People say that means death." The moans grew fainter and fainter. When the new day dawned Kirpu's mother lay dead. The plague had come to the village.

When the neighbors heard that Laree was dead, they were filled with fear and many made hasty preparations for flight. No one entered the stricken home. Surely this sudden death meant plague. Kirpu's father went out and bought the wood for the funeral pyre, then returning home, prepared the body for the burning. He moved about as one dazed. He could not realize she was gone and would never more move about the little home, so happy in the love of her son and the respect of her husband. Wrapping the body in a coarse sheet, he carried it himself to the burning place, followed by Kirpu who was weeping bitterly for the mother he loved so dearly. No Brahmin came near to help them in the last sad rites. The body was placed carefully on the heaped-up logs, a fire was lighted, and the two lone watchers sat near until all should be over. When only a handful of ashes remained they turned away—father and son—and walked wearily back to the empty home. No mother's smile to welcome them, no bright coals in the hearth. As he entered the room where Laree had died Kirpu's father was seized with faintness. He staggered to the cot and fell down upon it. Poor Kirpu was crazed with grief. Would his father die too? All night long the lonely boy sat beside the stricken man's bed, now giving the sufferer a drink, now rubbing and pressing the aching head. Oh! if some one would only come and sit inside the room and speak a word of comfort to him! His father's ravings grew wilder as the fever increased; his body twitched in convulsions. "Surely," thought Kirpu, "we have grievously offended the gods."

When another day dawned Kirpu's father lay dead, and the plague had found a second victim in the village. Kirpu, seeing his father lie so still, fled screaming from the house. Down the village lane he ran, then across the green wheat fields, on into the great white dusty road that stretched northwards, into the depths of the snow-clad Himalayas. Kirpu chose, he knew not why, the way of the plains toward the south and trudged wearily on mile after mile, until he came near a town. Here he was met by a tall, gentle faced man, clad in white muslin garments who said to him, "My son why are you weeping and from whence have you come?"

With a fresh outburst of grief the heart-broken boy sobbed out his pitiful story. As the kind man listened, he realized the utter loneliness of this boy in his grief.—Not a villager had come near to help him. For a moment the friendly stranger's heart was filled with resentment. But he remembered that it was only since Christ had come into his heart, that he had love and compassion for those in sorrow and suffering. To the boy he said, "Come with me. I will take you to friends." With a grave little salam, Kirpu allowed the man to lead him into a clean, neat yard, where stood a house larger than any he had ever seen. Fear came into his heart as he was led up

on the veranda, for he had heard strange tales of what happened to children who wandered into the homes of the "Angrez log"—English people. A rap on the door brought a lady, whom Kirpu remembered having seen one day in his home and fear left his heart. She had spoken so kindly to all the women and children who had gathered round her that day and he remembered yet how sweet were the words she had sung to them. As he now looked into her sunny face he wondered if she would not again sing to him.

As he sat quietly on the matting by her side, the kind man, who was the pastor of the congregation, told the Miss Sahiba Kirpu's story. Tears came into her eyes, as she heard of the ravages of the plague and she said, "Oh my poor people, how long must you suffer!" Then turning to the Christian man, she said, "you know Pastor how my home is now full of school girls and how busy I am teaching them and the women of this town, but this poor orphan boy must be cared for. For the present he shall remain with me." Calling Kirpu, she said, "you have no one who cares for you. Would you like to live in my home?" His smile showed his glad approval.

Kirpu now entered upon a life that was full of constant surprises. Being a Hindu, he at first missed the religious rites that had been performed in every part of his home life, but he soon forgot these in the interest he found in the new way of worshipping a new God.

When the teachers and girls in the Miss Sahib's home knelt so reverently in prayer morning and evening, Kirpu at first looked earnestly for the idol before which they seemed to be worshipping, and not finding one, was much puzzled until a boy of his own age, one day, explained to him that the Christians pray in the name of one called Jesus. From that day Kirpu began to pray. He was taught to read and soon, to his teacher's delight, he was able to read the New Testament. He learned to work as well. He kept the large water jars filled to the brim with cool water from the deep well. Before each meal he would bring a fresh supply for the table. When the Miss Sahiba would come in from the forenoon's work among the town or village people, so thirsty and weary, she always found Kirpu ready with a glass of sparkling water for her. He cared for the palms, and potted plants, and was happy when he had a few fresh flowers for the table.

Plans were being made to send him to a boarding school so that he might be prepared to teach his people, when great excitement arose in the town over the news that a young Hindu man in an adjoining town had become a Christian. This reminded some of the townsfolk that they had seen a Hindu lad over at the missionary's home. They now became zealous to have him saved from that religion of the foreigners where no caste was respected. "Who knows," said one old Hindu, "how much his faith may have been injured. We must get him away." "But how?" asked the stingy money lender, "these people have the power of winning the affections of many of our foolish ones and it may not be so easy to persuade the boy to leave them. I remember how my daughter Kirdar who attended the Mission School, thought so much of her teachers and of what she was taught that she could talk of nothing else. At last one day she refused to go to the temple to worship, and I then forbade her ever going outside our home until she should be married and carried away to her husband's home."

"We must take this boy's case into court," said the crafty lawyer, who was a nephew of the money lender. "You people raise money to pay the court fees and I'll make out a case and see it through. The boy must be

saved to his caste. I'll make my fees reasonable." A subscription paper was passed around, and with great difficulty a few rupees were wrung from these men of mean and shrivelled soul. Money was in reality dearer to them than caste or religion.

A man was finally found who was willing to pose as Kirpu's uncle, for a handful of silver. But he was not so willing to be burdened with the boy. When asked to put in a claim, he retorted, "I don't want the boy. I can barely support my own children. What do I care what happens to him?" "But in the name of our religion you must do it," said the old priest. "Don't you see that with all these government and Mission Schools our religion is fast leaving us? Why, the boys tell me that our gods are only a myth, and as for wearing the mark of worship on their foreheads, they would rather have a gay new turban for their heads. Only yesterday a boy told me that the earth is round, not flat, as our gods say."

A day was set for the trial. Kirpu and the Miss Sahiba were called to appear before the native judge. Kirpu explained in clear tones how he had been cared for by the Miss Sahiba at a time when he had no one to befriend him and how until he himself was willing, he had not eaten their food. No compulsion had been used. He did not want to leave this new home and moreover he had learned to love Jesus and would not forsake him. On hearing this bold declaration a few of the old Hindus uttered sounds of dismay. The boy was lost to them.

The case wore on day after day and a decision was not given until a month from the time it began. The lawyer and Judge were both Hindus and it was no surprise to the Miss Sahiba when the verdict was given: "Kirpa Dass must go to his lawful guardian, his uncle, who has a claim on him!" Poor Kirpu! How could he go to this man who did not love him and who did not want him, and leave the kind friends who had become so dear to him. One thing he well knew, he would not give up Jesus.

The parting was sad for all on the Mission Compound. They would sorely miss the bright-eyed, cheerful boy and what would his life be in the Hindu home into which he was being forced. The Miss Sahiba's sorrow was perhaps the keenest of all for she had endured much for his sake. In saying good-bye she knelt with him in prayer and committed him to the Savior he now loved so sincerely and said, "Kirpu, I think you will be able to come to us again some day. In the meantime win others to Jesus."

Three years passed. The Miss Sahiba had been to the home land and had returned, and was now working in another station where new work was being rapidly opened. One day, a tall youth of fifteen or sixteen years of age, came up to her tent door and said he would like to have a little talk with her. She asked him to come inside, and as she noticed his eager, expectant look she recognized the dear boy for whom she had daily prayed these three years. Before a word was uttered the two knelt down and thanked God for the reunion and for his loving care over Kirpu. He now told her briefly his history. How his uncle never cared for him but made him a slave in the home; how he ran away and secured a position as postman in a rural district; how finally having heard of the death of his uncle and the village priest from plague, he determined to return to the Miss Sahiba who had been as a mother to him. He showed her his well-worn New Testament and said he had not forgotten to pray. Again he was prepared for the Christian School and is now there in one of the upper classes making good progress in his studies and we believe will one day be a leader among some of his old friends in the village of Mamoon.



PRAYING SAMUEL.

Matilda Strang Hyde



HAVE seen him many a time. He used to be stationed on a table in Annabel's room, always kneeling, always with his eyes turned to the ceiling, and always

with a look of indescribable yearning on his little white face. We took him quite as a matter of course, Annabel and I, and his presence never abashed us in the least in our festivities. That praying Samuel had a mission in this world never for a moment entered our heads. He might orig-

inally have been intended as an example of continuous prayer, but I am afraid that made little difference on cold nights. I remember that once I expressed a desire that he stand up and take a rest, and even asked him if he did not need some more clothes, but, being by nature cold, he only looked up at the ceiling. Now, even a plaster of paris figure, snub-nosed and dusty, can have a mission.

Little Hattie was one of the children in the K—— Orphanage. Her face always seemed to me very pathetic, with its wistful grey eyes and yellowish skin, surmounted by yellow hair that rolled in short curls all over her head. Every one listened when Hattie talked. Dusky Isadore was undoubtedly the wit of the little girl's home, but in a mischievous way. Hattie's drollness, while whimsical, was serious. She was funny without knowing it.

When she talked she puckered her little forehead, and an anxious expression possessed her thin face, as if there were something she very much wanted that she was afraid she could not have; and indeed this look of anxiety never wholly left her. It was a part of herself, as much as were her little white teeth or her wistful grey eyes.

Her history was sad as it was brief. Her father had run away and left her mother when Hattie was a baby, upon which the mother had proceeded to drink herself to death. The story does not take long in the telling, but it must have seemed long enough to that scrap of six.

Just how she was rescued I never heard, except that a missionary one day brought the shivering little bundle of rags to the comfortable home on the hill, where she was bathed and put into warm clothes, and, in no time at all, had found her way into all of our hearts.

I used to wonder if she ever thought of the old days in the tumble-down shack, through which the wind must have whistled night after night. As, at a well-ordered table, she ate her regular three meals a day, with plenty of bread and butter, did she recall the years when crusts had been welcome?

I loved to look in with Annabel in the early evening when the children of various ages and as many shades gathered for their accustomed frolic with their foster-mother, and I always suspected that Miss McNeil felt a special tenderness for the wistful waif, who, her little life long, had been starved of all that was tender. Did the child ever look back, I again asked myself, to wonder at the happy contrast, the darkness of the little cabin with the sunshine of this happy home? And when each little orphan knelt by the side of her clean white bed, did Hattie realize, could she, in the faintest way, the depth of that for which she lisped thanks to her heavenly Father?

Who can read the child-mind? If any one could have looked into that baby's heart, it was the foster-mother, to whom the children, big and little, gave their early confidences. Hattie remained always shy, but it was Miss McNeil who at last, by intuition, discovered the child's great secret.

It seemed that there was something that Hattie did very much want, and the more she brooded the more she wanted it. We would often see her with her rag-doll sitting apart from the other children with their families of gay little china dolls, and looking first at her unfortunate rag-baby and then at its small china neighbors. How much she wanted a doll with a real head she thought nobody knew. Her baby had a dough-face, with pencil marks for eyes and mouth, and such a ridiculous nose! Each time she realized these facts completely she would throw the doll aside, neglecting it for two or three days at a time, but, the mother-instinct reviving, she would once more acknowledge her unhappy offspring. Daily the doll became more dumpish, daily the small mother reflected her dumps.

One afternoon a colored girl called with a message for me from Miss Ida, and please would I lend her my water-colors?

I was young, and wanted to know things, so I said, "What does Miss Ida want with the paints?" The girl could'nt say. As a result I concluded to deliver the paints in person. I learned that Miss Ida was at the Orphanage, and, with the paints, went there in search of her.

I found her in Miss McNeil's room by the open window, Annabel and Miss McNeil beside her. In Miss McNeil's hands I beheld the body and detached head of a doll. She handed me the doll's head, which, after the manner of doll-heads, had a hole in each corner of the bust.

"Oh!" I exclaimed, and you can imagine how I felt, for there, in those supplicating eyes, that unmistakable snub nose, I recognized the lineaments of poor praying Samuel!

"What did you behead him for?" I asked horrified.

"Praying Samuel," Miss Ida paused to remark impressively, "was born for a destiny."

Well, I knew what a destiny was, or thought I did, but what did that have to do with cutting off people's heads?

At that juncture, under Miss Ida's impersonal touch, on went rose lake and ultra marine, until Samuel's once pallid cheeks and hollow eyes glowed like patches of a very gay sky. When his white locks had been bathed in

yellow ochre, his bust was neatly stitched to his new body, over his limbs were slipped a dainty outfit of muslin and lace, and lo, a charming girl-doll!

"She should be called Samuella," I suggested, with a show of regret for her past.

"Nothing of the kind," asserted Miss Ida, with much decision. "This is another incarnation."

That was a poser for me. I had to run home and look it up in the dictionary.

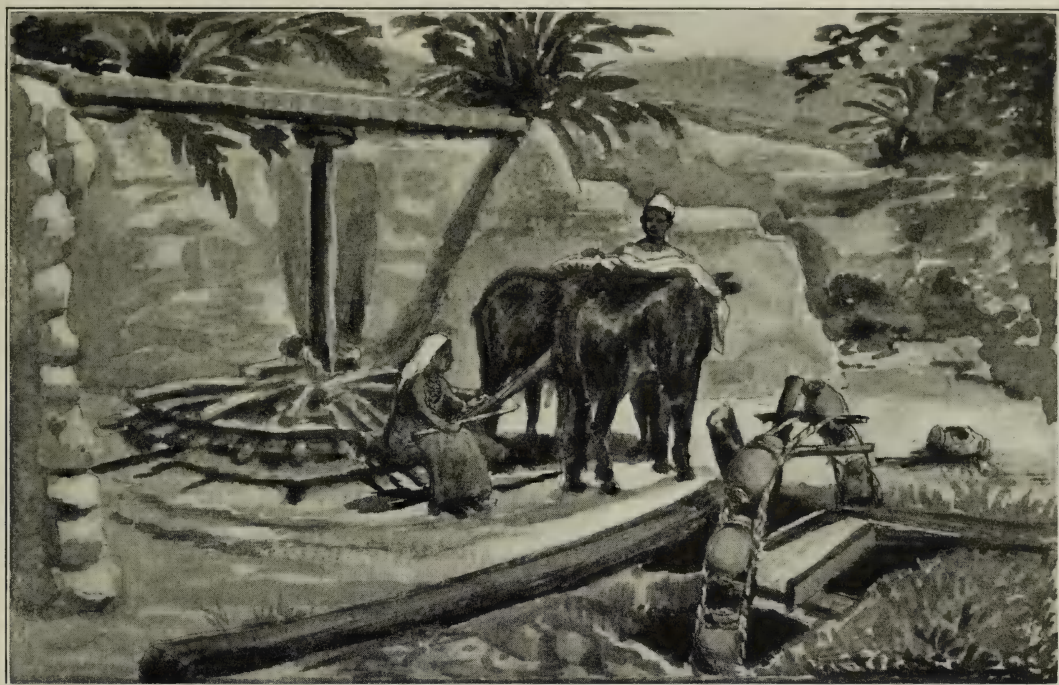
As I said, praying Samuel had been transformed, by means of very simple magic, into a lovely girl-doll. To be sure, the child had a sad crick in the neck, and praying Samuel would always be praying Samuel to the rest of us, but, oh, if you had but seen the ecstasy of delight in which Hattie, in her new mother-hood, took him into her arms! How, upon introducing her to her new abode, she hushed the blue-eyed, rosy-cheeked Angelina Maud to sleep!

Annabel and I remarked the resemblance between Hattie and her new baby, the same anxious look in both their faces, as though transmitted from mother to child. The latter made a good appearance amongst his china associates, though it is possible they always thought him a trifle proud of his good connections, as he would persist in looking above them.

After Samuel had lived a goodly number of days, as children count them, he came to a sudden and cruel end. A fall on the stone pavement completely broke him up.

I was there when he was swept up. When his mangled remains had been gathered together and decently composed, I noticed that he had not lost his wistful expression.





AT THE WATER WHEEL.

(Little girl with her doll.)



From babyhood the Egyptian girl is taught by her mother to look forward to a brilliant marriage.

HEAR, my blossom, the water-wheel's song,
Creaking and groaning and droning along.
Creak! groan! groan! creak!
With now, as it turns, a pitiful squeak.

The oxen are patient, the water is glad,
The wheel is the only one that is sad.
Wheel, do you know, while we're taking our ride,
You're drawing water for acres wide?
Each brown jar, as you rise and fall,
Helps the farmer, and helps us all,
As plash upon plash, the waters dash.
Creak! plash! creak! plash!

(To her doll.)

The air is soft, so soft,
For the yellow sun is abloom.
I'll gather you some for a bed
By the lattice in the room
That your dreams may be as rare
As the secret I've kept for you.
(Creak! plash! creak!
The water-wheel will be true.)



*"I'll throw a handful of corn,
And here is a handful for you."*

Where do you think I've been
And built you a lovely home?
Under the tangerine!
Fountains it has, and a dome.
I've made them of river shells,
And sticks and little bright stones.
While Asfar, drollest of dogs,
Assisted with chicken bones!
(Creak! creak! creak!
Hear the water-wheel's groans!)

I've added a greeny bower
And there, when oranges bloom,
To you my pigeon, my flower,
Kamil, the prince, will come.
After the feast is spread,
In satin gown and a crown,
Hanim shall be a bride,
Splendidest bride in town.
The dancers shall dance all night,
The music shall beat all day,
And we'll scatter gold guineas to left and right
In an indolent, lordly way.
(Plash! plash! plash!
Hear what the water-jars say!)
(Jumps down from water-wheel.)

But come, we must feed the hens,
And the struttiful doodle-doo.
I'll throw a handful of corn
And here is a handful for you.
Look how each tiny kat-koot
Twinkles its thin little legs!
In less than a year, katakeet,
You'll be laying dozens of eggs.
Eggs from the nest so warm,
Milk from the cow so kind,—
Hanim, believe me, a better home
Than this you will never find.

Matilda Strang Hyde



CAP'N PRATT

Tillie E. Johnson



CAP'N PRATT never did anything on land or sea to give him a right to the title Captain, for he is only a little colored boy in the Black Belt of Alabama. His father admired the big burly river captain whom he saw striding along the deck when he took his butter and eggs down to the steamer to sell. So when the tenth addition to the Smith family came, he was named Cap'n Pratt. Captain Pratt, indeed, is not the only member in the family bearing a title. There is Governor Moore Smith, and Lawyer Jones Smith, while the eldest brother is known as George Washington Smith.

Cap'n Pratt's home is a low one-room cabin in the middle of a cotton field, and often he and his three brothers who share his bed lie at night and watch the stars through the chinks and cracks till they fall asleep. A bed for father and mother with four year old Mattie at the foot, another for the five girls sleeping "heads and points," a rickety chair or so, an empty soap box for a seat, and a table complete the furniture, except for the skillet and baker under the table, for the cooking is done in the big fireplace which takes up nearly half of one end of the cabin.

I'm sure you would never guess where the provisions are kept. Every Saturday Cap'n Pratt's father goes to the plantation store and gets the weekly rations for the family, usually seven pounds of side meat and three pecks of meal. These are put away back under the bed,—for safety, maybe. Never in all his life has this little black brother sat down at a table to eat his breakfast, supper or dinner. When the "tete" (food) is done his mother calls him and his brothers and sisters to the fireplace, breaks off a hunk of corn bread out of the skillet, and pours some molasses into tin buckets or lids or pans, one for each. The larger boys and girls stand, or sit on the edge of the bed, while the smaller ones sit on the floor or doorstep and sop their bread in the sorghum with much more relish than some boys and girls I know who feed upon the daintiest fare.

When Cap'n Pratt was a baby of only a few weeks old, a string with a dirty little bag, suspended from the middle and containing dried roots, a mole foot, etc., was tied around his neck. This was to keep off disease and help him cut teeth. Days and days were spent by Cap'n Pratt in the cotton field, where his mother would carry him, and, finding a shady spot, would leave him in care of the next youngest, while she and the rest of the family would go up and down the long rows with sacks tied across their backs into which they stuffed the fleecy cotton.

On Sabbath morning this little boy puts on his clean clothes, (that is, if he has any, for it often happens that the mother is too tired to wash and patch on Saturday or his supply has given out,) and the clothes are sewed on him as they will not be taken off till the next week. You see when he goes to bed at night he does not have to undress and is not bothered about dressing next morning.

One of the greatest trials of Cap'n Pratt's young life is the weekly hair combing which also falls on Sabbath. Had he been a girl it would not have been so bad, for his sisters and mother too have their hair divided into ten or twenty parts and wrapped with vari-colored strings, some white, some red, others blue, and the ends of these wraps tied together and held in place by a "head rag" or bandanna. When he was old enough to go to school his father took charge of this part of his toilet and cut all the hair off except a small patch on top. How relieved he felt! hair combing days were over. But his teacher said the top must be combed daily and a straight part made as evidence. What did our boy do but get George Washington to cut the hair out in a straight line from front to back to look like a part!

Poor Cap'n Pratt's school life however was a brief one. It lasted only two months in the year and it was so long between the closing of one term and the opening of the next that he forgot nearly all he had learned and each year had to begin at almost the same place. But even this school is closed now because they cannot get a teacher, and Mr. Smith is too poor to send his boy to the mission school fifteen miles away.

So poor little Cap'n Pratt, with thousands of others like him, having no means to learn even to read and write, is growing up in ignorance, not because he wants to, but because he cannot help it,—he has no chance. I feel so sorry for him, don't you?

"You must tote yo' own sins now boy, you gwine on 'leben yeah ole," said Cap'n Pratt's father to him shortly after he had passed his tenth birthday. "You bettah get deligion, 'cause you gwine to hell sho's yo bawn ef ye doan. I done toted all you ten chillun's devilment 'til I most broke down

in my back. You's de las' one an' I is done wid you now, so you bettah git to prayin'."

You see Cap'n Pratt's father and nearly all the other boys and girls' fathers in the Black Belt believe that they are responsible for their children's sins till they are ten years old and there is no need of them becoming Christians until they reach that age.

As "Big Meetin'" or "protrack" was going on every night in the church of which Cap'n Pratt's father was head deacon, Cap'n, with several others went to the mourners bench to "git deligion" as his father had advised. Crowds gathered around the mourners, clapping their hands, patting their feet and swaying their bodies back and forth as they sang lustily:

"A is for Adam who was the first man,
D's for little Daniel in de lion's den,
J's for Jonah in de belly of de whale
P is for Paul in de Phillipian jail.

Cho. They was a witness for my Lord
An' you must be a witness for my Lord.
Sistah bettah min' how you walk on de cross
You right foot slip and you soul be lost.

Cho. An' you'll be a po' witness for my Lord
An' you won't be a witness for my Lord."

In the meantime one and another would lean over Cap'n Pratt and cry out, "Pray hard chile, de Debil is atter you sho, an' you got to see him an' cross over hell 'fore you git to Jesus," emphasizing each phrase with a decided pat on his back.

For several days Cap'n Pratt mourned, even venturing out in the woods by night and into the graveyard by day, trembling a little as he peered around occasionally lest "de Debil" should be in sight, yet pitifully pleading to see something that would be a sign of his acceptance. On the following Sabbath he went forward to join the church. The little log structure was packed to overflowing, visitors coming from miles around, curious to hear the "travels" of the new converts.

"Cap'n Pratt" said the preacher, "tell de church yo' trabels in gittin from hell's dark doah; what is you seen, what is you heerd, my chile, dat makes you knock at de chuch doah today?" Cap'n Pratt arose, faced the preacher, and in a wierd, chanting tone gave the following account of his "travels." "I's been a prayin' an' a prayin' 'cause I know ef I doan git deligion I gwine to de bad place. Last night I went out 'hind de tater house, an' I lay down flat on de groun'; an' while I wuz a layin' dere I saw a light an' a little white man a comin' to me. He cut me open an' took out my heart, and den he sewed me up agin, an' tole me my sins is forgivin, my soul sot free."

Pratt sat down while murmurs of approval, amens and "I know dat chile's got it," were heard all over the house. "I move Cap'n Pratt be received into de chuch as a candidate for baptism," spoke up one of the deacons. After his baptism the convert is considered safe, and though he should lie, steal and even be sent to jail, his name still remains on the church book.

Whether the poor child in his longing for light, his imagination keyed up to the highest pitch by the intense excitement and emotion of the services, conjured up or dreamed his "travels," or whether the pitiful Father did send a ray from the Star of Bethlehem into his sinsick heart, I do not pretend to say. I only know there are multitudes in this land of school houses and churches thus misguided as to their eternal destiny.

O God pity the poor Cap'n Pratts in the Black Belt.



THE BABY'S NECKLAGE

Rena L. Hogg



HE baby's name was "the servant of the Lord," but he looked more like a forlorn Brownie that had strayed out of a fairy tale and got his clothes tattered and soiled in his wanderings that any servant of the Lord you ever saw. He wore an old thin gown that came to the ankles of his little bare feet, a funny peaked hood fastened tightly under his chin, and a necklace so long that it hung away down under one of his arms. The necklace was not the least pretty. It had no beads strung on it, nor any ribbon tying it. It was only a long bit of thick string with funny little leather bundles knotted on to it here and there and one little pink cross in the midst of them. The "Brownie" thought the pink cross very pretty.

It was the only thing he had ever worn that was not ugly. His mother was afraid to dress him prettily lest people would look at him and her with envy, and their evil eye and wicked thoughts would hurt her baby. Instead of buying some pretty muslin to make a dress for him she had begged old patches from her friends and made the little gown for her first-born son out of these odds and ends. And the gown was very dirty, and so were the peaked hood and the little face that peered out of it, for the mother was as afraid to keep her baby clean as she was to dress him prettily.

The only thing about the baby that had cost her anything was the clumsy, ugly necklace, and that had cost her more than half a dollar. That seemed a great deal of money to Gutta, but she did not grudge it in the least, for she thought it would keep her baby well and strong, and you must remember that the dirtiest little baby you ever saw may be just as precious to one mother as the cleanest of babies is to another. The little bundles on the necklace were charms. She had bought some of them from Mohammedan holy men and some of them from ignorant priests, and though she did not know what was in them except that it was sentences out of a book that some people said was holy, yet she had always heard that charms such as these could keep a baby from having sore eyes or measles or smallpox, and because everybody said this and all the other babies wore them she liked her baby to wear them, too.

I have told you that the baby's name was "the servant of the Lord," but I do not think that he was serving Him very hard the day I am going to tell you of. It was Sabbath, it is true, and he was attending a meeting, but then, he did not like the meeting at all. He went there only because he had to (like some other people I know), and he did as much fussing as he could find any excuse for. Sometimes his mother Gutta jogged him on her knee to keep him quiet, and sometimes it was his granny who was dandling him, and sometimes both of them grew tired of the business and handed him over to his little aunt Fulla, who took him outside to amuse him and slipped in again as soon as he was quiet, bringing him back with her.

The missionary was talking about faith that day, as she often does, and she was trying to show the women that faith can make a beautiful glow in a home if it is burning brightly and if its light is allowed to shine out in acts. And she told her little audience that though none of them would be so foolish as to put a lighted lamp under the big basin they mix their dough in, instead of turning the basin upside down and putting the lamp on top, they did things that were just as foolish with their flickering lamp of faith.

Now, while she was talking, her eye fell on Gutta's baby, the little "Servant of the Lord," and on his long necklace. He was sitting on his mother's knee at the time, and she was listening to every word, and sometimes making a remark to the missionary in answer, as if the missionary were talking only to her and no one else were listening. And when the missionary noticed the baby's necklace she asked Gutta a question.

"Gutta," she said, "what are you doing with your lamp of faith? Are you letting its light shine out?" Gutta said, "Yes," but the missionary was not satisfied. "Who is taking care of your baby, then, Gutta?" she asked. Gutta was surprised. "Our Lord," she answered promptly.

"If He didn't, what would happen, Gutta?"

"Why, he would die," she said at once. "Our lives are in His hand."

"Then, Gutta," continued the missionary, "if you are really trusting the Lord to take care of your baby, why does he wear a necklace of charms? Are you sure you are having faith in the Lord and not in the charms?"

Gutta looked down at her little boy, fiddled with the charms on the string and did not know what to say. How could she say that she trusted the charms and not the Lord? Of course, the Lord was greater. I think down in her heart two voices were speaking. The one said doubtingly, "The Lord may be greater. He can send us health or sickness as He wills; but perhaps there is some good in the charms, too. But the other spoke out bravely and trustfully, and I think she must have listened to it, for when the missionary asked her if she believed in the power of the necklace she answered, "No, it can do nothing. It is only the Lord who gives health."

"But don't you see, Gutta," urged the missionary, "that though you have faith in the Lord that He will take care of your boy, that faith can make no light around you, and cannot lead any one else into the truth as long as you cover it up under the old foolish custom of making him wear a necklace of charms to protect him?"

Again Gutta did not know what to say. What she did say was, "The necklace is nothing. I put it on only because every one else did."

And then the missionary thought she would try another plan, and I fear had you looked at her at that moment you would have found a little twinkle of mischief in her eyes as she said: "Gutta, I wish you would give me the

necklace. You know I am going home, and I would like so much to have such a necklace to take with me."

The little mother looked up in amazement. "You want the necklace! What would you do with it?"

"Why, I would show it to my friends and to the women in my country. I think if they knew the women in Egypt believe that their children can be hurt by a mere look from envious eyes, that a look my send them some terrible disease or even kill them; if they knew that Egyptian women cannot trust God to protect their little ones but think there is a greater power than His in funny little leather bundles like those, they would pray for them more earnestly and be more anxious to help them. Won't you give me the necklace, Gutta? I would so much like to have it?"

What do you think Gutta said? She was very polite and the missionary had never asked her for anything before, and it was very difficult to say no. Besides, she had just said that there was no power in the charms and that God alone could protect. Yet what she said was: "But suppose my baby should get ill while you are away?"

Ah, it is one thing to open one's heart to a new faith and it is another to turn the old beliefs out, to deny them utterly and to show that in your acts! Gutta was proving this now.

The missionary would not urge her further. She began to talk again about the covered light and the meeting went on as before. A fight was going on in her heart between the two voices that had spoken, the voice of fear and the voice of faith, the false belief and the true. The closing psalm was sung, collection box went round, the little company rose to pray, and then the time came for the last good-byes. Seven months would pass before the missionary would meet them again in that little court, and her last and only request Gutta had denied her.

Gutta could stand it no longer. "You can have them," she said suddenly. "See, you can have the whole necklace," and she held out her baby to the missionary.

"But, Gutta, I don't want to take them," she said. "I wouldn't like to have them unless you yourself had given them to me."

"Then I'll give them to you," Gutta answered bravely, and so saying she seized the string of charms and began to take them off the little boy's neck.

But something happened just then that no one had bargained for.

Ah, you little "Servant of the Lord," who was it you were serving that day, I should like to know?

What do you suppose he did?

Well, you see, he could not understand any of the talk about faith and lamps and letting the light shine out, and what did he care about pleasing the missionary? There was only one thought in his mind now, and that was that his precious pink cross, the only pretty thing that had ever belonged to him, was going to be taken away. He clutched at the cross with all his baby might, threw back his behooded head, stiffened his little back, filled his lungs to their utmost limit, opened his mouth wide and yelled!

The women all stopped talking to see what would happen next. The missionary almost wished she had never noticed the necklace; and Gutta was still struggling bravely to fulfill her promise, when suddenly a voice rose above the din and the little fellow was lifted bodily, charms and all, out of

his mother's arms. It was the granny, and I don't remember what she said, but I suppose it was that everybody abused him except herself (that is what people always say to crying babies, isn't it?), and that if anyone was going to hurt him he should come to his granny, and that he could keep his little pink cross as long as he lived, if he wanted to.

So when the missionary went home she had no queer necklace of little leather bundles to show her friends!

But that is not the end of the story, though the missionary thought it was. The seven months passed and she came back again and when she saw "the Servant of the Lord" he smiled at her and held out his little hand and looked very good and happy. But the necklace was gone, and the cross, too! The little seed of truth had sprouted in Gutta's heart and borne fruit, and one day when "Abd-el-Sayyid" was sleeping (she called him Abd-el-Sayyid because she could not say "the servant of the Lord," and in Egypt, Abd-el-Sayyid means the same thing)—one day when Abd-el-Sayyid was sleeping she took off the necklace and hid it away and he never saw it again. And nothing happened. No evil eye hurt him. He did not have sore eyes or measles or smallpox. Instead of that he learned to walk and to say some words in his queer Arabic language, and was happy and well and strong, because the Lord that Gutta trusted took care of him.



WITH TARO IN WAR TIMES

Charlotte Burgess De Forest

"My Dear Boy Taro,—

I hope you are well and going to school every day. Be faithful in your lessons, so that you will have some good marks to show me when I get home. And don't be tardy at school.

"We are still on the march. Sometimes we have a skirmish with small bands of the enemy, but the main body of the Russians is still a few days ahead, near Mukden. When I come home, I'll tell you all about it. Till then, be a helpful little man about the house, and do all the nice things you can for mother, sister, and the baby.

Your loving
Father."



SUCH was the letter that Taro found inside the strange envelope free of postage because it was stamped "Soldiers' Mail." The letter was written very plainly—perhaps we should call it printed—in precise little angular letters that even seven-year-old Taro could read; and read it he did, over and over again, until he knew it by heart and could have told every word of it to the teacher without that proud unfolding of it for her admiration the following Monday morning.

"Be faithful in your lessons" rang through his mind all day, as he pored over his arithmetic sums or his reader. And when it came to his writing lesson, he handled his writing brush so neatly, and measured each stroke so carefully with his eye, that the teacher gave him a high mark, a great red "ko," like this: 甲 on his finished sheet. Taro was so proud and happy that, not content with the mother's praise that evening, he folded the precious "ko" paper into a long envelope addressed to Manchuria, to gladden the father's eyes. "I don't believe there are any children to go to school in Manchuria," he said to himself, "just nothing but soldiers and cannon,"—an ample field, however, for man's every ambition, was the tenor of his thoughts as he rolled into bed, between the thick quilts spread for him on the floor, and spent a night glorified with dreams of routed Russians re-treating over trackless wilds in the fortified deserts of which his mental Manchuria was composed.

So Taro went faithfully to school, and generally he had good marks. The teacher was specially pleased because he was never tardy; and when the end of the year came, and the children that had made grade, all had certificates for the year's work given them, Taro was one of five to receive a special paper as reward for a perfect record of attendance. That paper was too precious to risk sending away to Manchuria—the Russians might get it. So it was laid safe away in the photograph box to await the father's return.

As for being a "helpful little man about the house," that part of the letter was not so easy to follow. Something was always happening. One



"He stumbled over the brasier and upset the teakettle."

day he stumbled over the brasier, and upset the teakettle into the ashes and over the mats. Then mother had to clean the mats and fan up the fire again. Besides, his hand got hurt with the boiling water—he wondered if a bullet could possibly hurt as much as that. Another time, as he and sister were on their way to school, the thong of his clog (or shall we call it his shoe) gave way, and he didn't know how he could walk any further with nothing to hold the clog on. But O Hana came to the rescue and twisting a bit of soft paper into a string, mended

the thong so neatly that it felt very comfortable and strong between his toes. It seemed as if somebody was always doing for him, and as if he didn't do much for other people. To be sure, once when the baby was sick he had been to the hospital to get some medicine for her; and he had wanted to write father about it, only mother had said father would be worried if he knew baby had been sick; so Taro hadn't been able to tell about his one helpful deed. But he was waiting for a chance to do another that he could tell about.

Times grew hard. The father, the bread-earner—or rather, the rice-earner—away, little by little the small family savings were exhausted. An uncle who had occasionally sent a few dollars to eke out their scanty living, was taken ill and could do nothing more for the soldier's wife and children. Taro had at first complained over having no pickles to eat with his rice, but his mother had said, "Do you suppose father has any in Manchuria?" And Taro had fallen to meditating and had never again complained of his food, although soon afterward they had brownish rice instead of white, and once in a while no rice at all, only sweet potatoes. The mother looked anxious, O Hana was disconsolate, and the baby often fretted. Sometimes O Hana had to stay away



"O Hana came to the rescue and mended the thong."

from school a whole half-day, to take care of the baby while mother went to find work. But mother usually came back looking more discouraged than when she went.

One day at last, there was a gleam of relief in her face.

"I am going to work in the match factory," she told O Hana and Taro, "and then we can have real rice again. But I must go early and be away all day,—and what shall we do about the baby?"

The sad little faces that had brightened at the prospect of the white rice, fell again. One of them would have to stay at home all the time now. Taro's heart beat high with anxiety as he thought of his attendance record—was it to be spoiled? But the mother spoke again. O Hana being the older, could better leave school for a while, and, like the patient little pains-taker that she was, could be trusted with the care of the house and Baby OYuki.

O Hana accepted the responsibility with a grave eagerness and a becoming little dignity. As baby-tender and housekeeper she soon proved the fitness of the mother's choice. As for the mother, she came back from her long days at the factory to find a peaceful little trio, bent on preserving the family traditions of good behavior and contentment. To be sure, Taro did sometimes lay his school-bag on the floor and forget to put it away; and the baby, in her first attempts to walk, got many a bump and tumble; and O Hana's rice was sometimes underdone and sometimes burnt. But what of that?

"Oh, I say, Taro," said O Hana, one bright morning, "just watch the baby for a few minutes. I've got to go and buy some charcoal to cook the rice for dinner."

"But I've got to go to school. It's most time now. Can't you take her on your back?"

"She's getting awfully heavy; it's only round the corner, and I'll be back in a jiffy," said O Hana, clattering out of the gate before Taro could protest.

Taro grumbled to himself a bit, as he went on with his preparations for school. He put on his school-boy dress, the full, plaited, divided skirt, tying its strings securely round his waist; then slung his school-bag over his shoulder, put on his school cap, and taking the lunch O Hana had tied up for him in a bright bandanna handkerchief, stood in the gateway watching for her return,—one eye on the restless O Yuki, tottering along the walk behind him. The school was not far away, and looking across a neighbor's rice-field, he could see one corner of the long, low building, and little groups of children on the way or already in the playground on which the school house opened. How he longed to be going too! It must be almost time. He looked down street, but no O Hana was in sight. The baby, in great glee over having walked to the gate, was behind him, eagerly clutching his skirts with both little chubby hands. He lifted her over the threshold of the gate, and guided her as she toddled along, started down to the corner to meet O Hana. But still no one was in sight. There was the charcoal shop a few houses down street, but even her name, shouted twice and three times with all the power of Taro's young lungs, did not produce the longed-for O Hana.

Taro turned and looked toward the school house. The last two or three stragglers were going up the school steps. The sight was too much to bear

—had the bell rung? He grabbed the astonished O Yuki, and holding her tight with both arms, ran as fast as his clogs could clatter under him in the direction of the school house. He took the short-cut of a narrow path between paddy-fields and, though once he slipped and wet one foot in the muddy water round the rice stalks, he paid no heed to anything save the goal at which he was aiming. At last the gate was reached—it stood conveniently open—then a dash across the court, up the steps, clogs left unceremoniously below—into Room 3 by the teacher's door (that was nearer)—O Yuki left on the teacher's table—a dash down the aisle to his own desk, and then—the bell!



"He could see little groups of children on the way or already in the playground."

Panting and ashamed, yet exultant over having reached his seat before the fatal moment, Taro sat recovering his breath; while the baby, who had more to spare, let it out in unmistakable sounds of grief and alarm. Taro had left her on the perilous edge of the table and, had not the teacher soon recovered from her first shock of surprise, O Yuki might have had a harder fall than any her experimental walking had yet been the cause of.

"Why, Taro, whose baby is this?" asked the teacher, pausing in her attempts to quiet the still dismayed O Yuki. The roomful of children, who had been silently watching for some sign of the teacher's mood, gave a little laugh of relief.

"It's ours, teacher," said Taro, jerkily, between his short breaths, "and I was taking care of her,—but sister went to buy some charcoal,—and she didn't get back,—and mother,—she works in the factory,—and father, he's a soldier,—and he wrote me a letter and said I mustn't be late to school, and—and—"

But here the sobs that had been choking up his throat came bursting out, and he laid his arms on his desk and buried his face in them. A wave of sympathy passed over the children, they looked from Taro to the teacher. The teacher came down the aisle to his desk, carrying O Yuki.

"Yes, yes, you did quite right, Taro," she said, comfortingly. There were tears in her eyes, too. "And you weren't tardy, either, so father will be very happy. But baby can't stay at school,—I think sister must have got back by now, don't you? So you must take the baby back to her. She will be anxious if she doesn't find baby when she gets home."

Taro lifted his head and rose to take O Yuki from the teacher's arms. But he seemed reluctant to start.

"Teacher won't mark me absent or tardy or anything?" he asked with downcast eyes.

"You are going on an errand for me," answered the teacher with a reassuring smile.

Taro looked into her happy eyes and something of their brightness was reflected in his own, as he made a deep bow and carried the baby out of the room.

Thus Taro lived up to his father's letter. O Hana, filled with regret, promised never again to ask him to tend the baby before school. In fact, she had no more occasion to do so. For the very next day, which was Sabbath (for in Japan the children go to school even on Saturdays), O Hana, strolling out with the baby, heard some children singing in a house near by. So she went in, and found they were having "Sabbath School," as they called it, learning pretty songs and sentences, and hearing stories about lots of pretty pictures in which there was always one special Man dressed in white.



"How alive the streets were with the bright red and white flags."

And one of the teachers asked her all sorts of kind questions about her home and the baby, and then told her about a nice place where the baby could be left all day while mother was at the factory. She wouldn't have to pay any money, either, the lady said, for the kind people who would take care of the baby were doing it all for love of that Man in white, in the picture.

O Hana's mother went that very day to find out about it, and learned that it was just as the lady had told O Hana. So she took the baby to the free nursery every day on her way to the match factory, and O Hana went back to her class in school, glad not to have fallen very far behind.

After that, nothing special happened until father came back from the war. But what a long-to-be-remembered day that was! How alive the streets were with the bright red and white flags, and how the people swarmed and jostled against each other in their eagerness to see the troops alight! Taro and O Hana stood in the long procession of school boys and girls at the station, their hearts beating loud to the gay music of the welcoming band. And as the line of weather-beaten men under rifles and knapsacks filed by, how the children shouted "Banzai!" until their little throats were sore and their hearts' ardor a trifle abated. But best of all was to sit round the fire at home with father, and hear him tell how he had helped beat the Russians; and then to see his happy smile of approval and pride when they told him how O Hana had kept the house, and how Baby O Yuki had gone to school to keep a perfect record of attendance for Taro.



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